

Assignment TV

By TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY

SAN FRANCISCO — America may be a nation of city dwellers but its humor is still in the country. Just look at the membership roster of television's most exclusive club—the Nielsen Top Ten—and you'll find out the surest way to get kicked out is not to have a down home accent.

The club's president, Jim Nabors, whose "Gomer Pyle" finished third in national popularity this season was here recently and I hustled over to the Fairmont Hotel to see if I could tell where Nabors left off and Pyle begins.

He was out of uniform (Gomer is TV's most famous Marine) and he met me at the door in sweater and slacks.

combs directly below the Fairmont Tower. (In Alabama talk, "rat" is the opposite of "wrong.")

About eight years ago Nabors appeared for several months at San Francisco's Purple Onion. It was not long after he had lost his job as a film cutter at NBC.

"I didn't really have an act. I was broke and I just put together some songs on 69-cent sheet music blanks. I thought the Onion audience would be—you know—sophisticated. Right in the middle of my first song there was a scuffle at the door and a Grey Line Tour came in. Right away I relaxed. I knew they were MY people!"

"MY MOTHER really didn't know what I was doing for a living — and neither did I — come to think of it — so I brought her out from Sylacauga — that's in Alabama — to hear me. On the first show she sat in the front row with her pocketbook in her lap. On the second show she sat in the fifth row. And on the third show she was in the back row — asleep."

Nabors is a bachelor. He lives in a modest home in Studio City and drives a station wagon. Such a combination would be the kiss of death for most Hollywood stars, who live beyond their means.

"Well, shucks, I don't hardly have time to get my makeup off before I shower and fall in bed. It's a nice house."

"I'm one of those lucky people who enjoys being with his parents. Dad died before I got on television but it wouldn't have made any difference to him. He was always proud of all of us. Mother is visiting me now."

HE TOLD about being asked to a fancy Hollywood-style party given by Rock Hudson for Princess Grace last summer. "I invited my two sisters out to Hollywood that week because I knew they'd enjoy going. They're older. One's a director of nurses in a hospital and the other is a

housewife. They live on the same block down home and they've seen each other every day all their lives. They asked me what they were supposed to wear and someone said lounging pajamas so they went down and bought some. Well, down home they'd have burned a cross on the lawn if you wore something like that!"

Nabors sings in a voice that Time magazine describes as sounding "vaguely like a drain-pipe" but his five albums have been best sellers. Not long ago when he was talking to Irene Dunne a big man rushed over, gave him an affectionate embrace, and said: "You're a corny s.o.b. but I like you!"

I feel the same way.

Retarded Children's Week Observance Slated Here

Open house events are Beach Cities, and the Center scheduled today at the PAR Workshop, operated by the Southwest Association for Retarded Children and the Foundation for Exceptional Children, in observance of Retarded Children's Week, Nov. 12 through 23.

The PAR Workshop is located at 1725 W. 180th St. and is one of three sheltered workshops operated for the retarded in Los Angeles County.

In addition to the workshop, SARC operates a training school at 13515 S. Vermont Ave., Gardena, under the direction of Mrs. Ruth Holley. The facility serves retarded children in Torrance, Wilmington, Lomita, the

to all facilities operated by SARC.

ALL FACILITIES operated by SARC will be open to the public during the 10-day observance of Retarded Children's Week. Among the activities at the training center is a new class for older youngsters designed to provide pre-training for workshop and activity centers.

SARC officials also are taking the opportunity during the week to highlight the achievements of the association during the past year.

Those achievements include the completion of permanent facilities for the training center and the scheduling of bus service to transport children

OTHER SERVICES offered by SARC include group counseling for parents of mentally retarded youngsters. Dr. Eleanor Peterson of El Camino College directs the counseling program of the association.

Theme for the national observance of Retarded Children's Week is "Retarded Children Can Be Helped." A sub-theme for local observances is "Retarded Children Are Being Helped."

Lester Foster, principal of Columbia School here, is chairman of SARC's education and training committee.

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